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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Hidetoshi ITO et al.

Title: EXHAUST EMISSION CONTROL DEVICE

Appl. No.: Not yet assigned

Filing Date: Concurrently Herewith

Examiner: Not yet assigned

Art Unit: Not yet assigned

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Prior to examination please amend the application as follows:

In the specification:

Amend the specification by inserting after the title the following new sentence:

--This application is a divisional of application Serial No. 09/327,484 filed June 8, 1999.--

In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1-6 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please add the following new claims 7-21.

7. (New) An exhaust emission control device for an engine comprising:

a three-way catalytic converter containing rhodium (Rh), provided in an exhaust passage of the engine; and

a HC absorbent catalytic converter containing rhodium (Rh) and a HC absorbent material, provided in the exhaust passage downstream of the three-way catalytic converter, wherein a rhodium (Rh) content in the HC absorbent catalytic converter is higher than that in the three-way catalytic converter.

8. (New) An exhaust emission control device as claimed in claim 7, wherein the three-way catalytic converter is provided in proximity to an exhaust manifold of the engine.

9. (New) An exhaust emission control device as claimed in claim 7, further comprising:

a second HC absorbent catalytic converter provided in the exhaust passage downstream of the HC absorbent catalytic converter, wherein the second HC absorbent catalytic converter contains rhodium (Rh) and a HC absorbent material.

10. (New) An exhaust emission control device as claimed in claim 9, wherein the rhodium (Rh) content in the second HC absorbent catalytic converter is higher than that in the HC absorbent catalytic converter.

11. (New) An exhaust emission control device as claimed in claim 9, wherein the HC absorbent catalytic converter and the second HC absorbent catalytic converter are spaced apart from each other.

12. (New) An exhaust emission control device as claimed in claim 7, wherein the three-way catalytic converter further comprises at least one precious metal selected from platinum (Pt) and palladium (Pd).

13. (New) An exhaust emission control device as claimed in claim 7, wherein the HC absorbent catalytic converter further comprises at least one precious metal selected from platinum (Pt) and palladium (Pd).

14. (New) An exhaust emission control device as claimed in claim 7, wherein the HC absorbent catalytic converter comprises zeolite as the HC absorbent material.

15. (New) An exhaust emission control device as claimed in claim 7, wherein the three-way catalytic converter further comprises platinum (Pt), and wherein platinum (Pt) content in the three-way catalytic converter is higher than that in the HC absorbent catalytic converter.

16. (New) An exhaust emission control device as claimed in claim 9, wherein the three-way catalytic converter further comprises platinum (Pt), and wherein platinum (Pt) content in the three-way catalytic converter is higher than that in the HC absorbent catalytic converter.

17. (New) An exhaust emission control device as claimed in claim 16, wherein platinum (Pt) content in the HC absorbent catalytic converter is higher than that in the second HC absorbent catalytic converter.

18. (New) An exhaust emission control device as claimed in claim 7, wherein the HC absorbent catalytic converter has a coating of the HC absorbent material on a catalyst carrier and a coating of a three-way catalyst on the coating of the HC absorbent material.

19. (New) An exhaust emission control device as claimed in claim 7, wherein the HC absorbent catalytic converter has a coating that comprises a mixture of the HC absorbent material and a three-way catalyst on a catalyst carrier.

20. (New) An exhaust emission control device as claimed in claim 7, wherein the rhodium (Rh) content by amount in the HC absorbent catalytic converter is higher than that in the three-way catalytic converter.

21. (New) An exhaust emission control device as claimed in claim 10, wherein the rhodium (Rh) content by amount in the second HC absorbent catalytic converter is higher than that in the HC absorbent catalytic converter.

REMARKS

New claims 7-21 are provided by this Preliminary amendment. New claims 7-19 recite that rhodium (Rh) content in the HC absorbent catalytic converter is higher than that in the three-way catalytic converter. Thus, claims 7-19 cover the situation where the rhodium content by either percentage or amount is higher. Claims 20 and 21 cover the situation where the rhodium content is specifically by amount. Support for this feature of these new claims can be found at least on page 6, lines 16-20 of the present specification. Entry of the foregoing amendments prior to examination is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

AUG 3 0 2001

Date: _____

By _____

FOLEY & LARDNER
Washington Harbour
3000 K Street, N.W., Suite 500
Washington, D.C. 20007-5109
Telephone: (202) 672-5489
Facsimile: (202) 672-5399

Richard L. Schwaab
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 25,479